

SURGICAL TECHNOLOGISTS, also called surgical or operating room technicians, assist in operations, under the supervision of surgeons, registered nurses, or other surgical personnel. They prepare operating rooms with surgical instruments, equipment, and sterile linens needed during an operation. Technologists also may prepare patients for surgery by cleaning, shaving, and disinfecting body areas where the surgeon will operate. They may transport patients to operating rooms, help position them on the operating table, and drape linens over the patient to prevent exposure.

During surgery, Surgical Technologists pass instruments and other sterile supplies to surgeons and surgeons' assistants. They hold retractors, cut sutures, and keep inventory of sponges, needles, and instruments used during the operation. Technologists also help in the care and disposal of specimens removed for testing during operations and help apply dressings or bandages. They may also operate sterilizers, lights, suction machines, and diagnostic equipment. After an operation, Surgical Technologists help transfer patients to the recovery room and assist nurses in cleaning and restocking the operating room for the next operation.

Requirements

- ▲ High school diploma or equivalent.
- ▲ Completion of a one-year Surgical Technician/Technology training program accredited by the American Medical Association's Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation.
- ▲ Some hospitals require certification by the Liaison Council on Certification of Surgical Technologists.
- ▲ Ability to interact with different kinds of patients and other health professionals.
- ▲ Ability to follow technical instructions.
- ▲ Manual dexterity and ability to work precisely and accurately.
- ▲ Capacity to perform well under stress or in emergencies.
- ▲ Fingerprint clearance may be required by employer.

Surgical Technologists

Wages

- ▲ Surgical Technologists
Median hourly wage: \$20.19
- ▲ Average annual wage: \$42,519

Source: Occupational Employment Survey of Employers 2006 by EDD/LMID.

Job Outlook

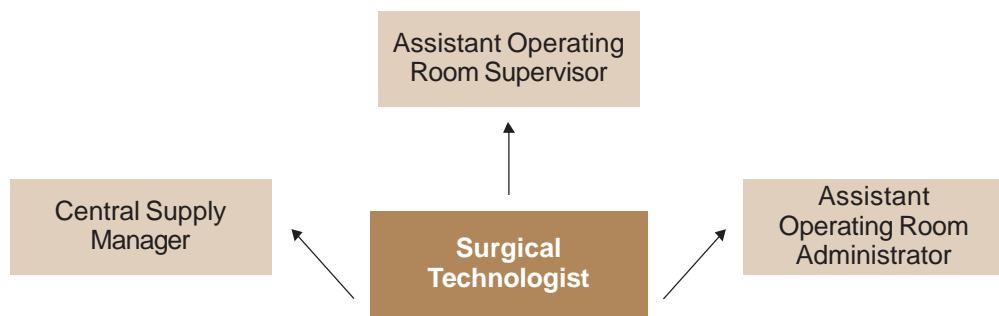
- ▲ Estimated number of Surgical Technologists in 2004: 9,400
- ▲ Estimated number of Surgical Technologists in 2014: 11,700
- ▲ Estimated annual job openings: 350

Source: Occupational Projections, EDD/LMID.

Sources of Information

- ▲ Association of Surgical Technologists
(800) 637-7433
www.ast.org
- ▲ National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting
(800) 707-0057
www.nbtsa.org
- ▲ *California Occupational Guide*, No. 462
Surgical Technicians

Possible Career Paths



The skills, knowledge, and abilities acquired for the primary occupation provide a solid foundation for further growth in health career occupations. Additional education or training is often required.